

**STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**PUBLIC HEARING NOVEMBER 16, 2017**  
**PROPOSED SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**  
**FILE NO. SO-01-2017**

SPOKANE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND PLANNING

**Proposal**

The proposal is an amendment to the Spokane County Subdivision Ordinance, Section 12.500 related to provisions for the delegation of final plat approval administratively to the planning staff. Additional housekeeping changes were also made throughout the Subdivision Ordinance to reflect changes in department names. (See Attachment A)

**Background**

The proposed amendment is the result of a revision to RCW 58.17.100, which reflects that legislative authorities may delegate final plat approval. Prior to the revision, sole authority to approve final plats and to adopt or amend platting ordinances resided in the legislative bodies. Following the passage of Senate Bill 5674, the legislative authorities of cities, towns, and counties may by ordinance delegate final plat approval to an established planning commission or agency, or to such other administrative personnel in accordance with state law or local charter. As such, the proposed amendment clarifies that once a final plat has been reviewed and approved by the Planning Director, and signed by applicable agencies, the Building and Planning Department shall file the final plat.

This proposed amendment also includes some housekeeping changes to reflect changes in department names. More specifically, the Spokane County Building and Planning Department was considered a division of Spokane County Public Works. However, the Building and Planning Department is no longer considered a division of the Public Works Department, and instead is a department of its own.

**Spokane County Comprehensive Plan**

In the Spokane Comprehensive Plan, there is limited text regarding final plat approval processes. However, there is some discussion about the timeliness and efficiency of administrative review processes. The following are the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies related to plat approval and administrative review processes.

**The Growth Management Act Section of the Comprehensive Plan**

The GMA identifies thirteen broad goals to guide local governments in the planning process. Local plans must implement these goals in a balanced manner. One goal that corresponds directly to the proposed amendment is “predictability and timeliness of permit review processes.” Additionally, Spokane County’s Comprehensive Plan is required to have internal consistency among the plans various elements.

**Economic Development Chapter of Comprehensive Plan**

**Goal**

ED.5a Provide consistent, fair and timely regulations that are flexible, responsible and effective.

ED.5b Promote public/private partnerships that encourage innovation and creativity in the economic expansion of our region.

**Policies**

ED.5.5 Each individual citizen Each individual citizen will be afforded the highest possible quality of customer service and attention to aid in facilitation of Spokane County’s Economic Development.

ED.5.6 Review development regulations continuously to ensure clarity, consistency, predictability and direction. Provide opportunities for citizens to initiate amendments to inconsistent, outdated, inappropriate or unnecessary or confusing regulations. Amendments shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

ED.5.7 Ensure timely processing of applications by requiring that mandatory timelines, consistent with state legislation, are adhered to for permitting processes.

**Spokane County Subdivision Ordinance**

The proposed amendment is consistent with the format and general purpose and intent of the Subdivision Ordinance. Which states.

12.100 - INTRODUCTION

12.100.102 Purpose and Intent

In addition to those purposes set forth in chapter 58.17 Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the following purposes are also essential to the regulation of the subdivision of land within the unincorporated areas of Spokane County.

- 1) To prescribe procedures for the subdivision of land in accordance with officially adopted plans, policies, and standards, including the provisions of the Spokane County Zoning Code and Spokane County Comprehensive Plan; and
- 2) To provide for consistent and efficient processing of applications without undue delay; and
- 3) To provide uniform standards and regulations for the division of land; and
- 4) To promote effective use of land consistent with environmentally sensitive development practices; and
- 5) To implement State Environmental Policy Act chapter 43.21C RCW, and WAC 197-11; and
- 6) To require uniform monumentation of land subdivisions and conveyancing by accurate legal descriptions; and
- 7) To promote uniform and consistent addressing of parcels of land countywide.

**Staff Analysis**

The proposed amendment meets the general purpose and intent of both the State Subdivision laws and the Spokane County Subdivision Ordinance.

**Public Notice**

Notice of the proposed amendment was published in the Legal Notice section of the Spokesman Review on November 1, 2017. The proposal was mailed to 19 agencies for review and comment dated November 1, 2017 with comments requested by November 15, 2017. Washington State Department of Commerce was also notified in accordance with RCW 36.70A.106 on October 17, 2017. The public hearing is scheduled for November 16, 2017, at 9:00 am or as soon as possible thereafter in the Public Works Hearing Room, located at 1026 West Broadway Avenue, Spokane, WA, 99260.

**Environmental Review**

A nonproject environmental checklist was prepared and reviewed by Building and Planning Staff and a Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) was issued on November 1, 2017, and circulated to 19 agencies with an appeal period ending on November 15, 2017. The DNS was also published in the Spokesman Review on November 1, 2017. No comments or appeals have been filed at the time of production of this report.

**Attachments**

- A. Subdivision Ordinance Text Amendment.

# **Attachment A**